

In the Claims:

Please amend claim 23 as follows:

Sub
H1

23. (Amended) A method for detecting the presence of a target molecule in a composition suspected of containing said target molecule, said method comprising:

contacting said composition with a catalytically inactive RNA molecule which [is capable of binding] binds to said target molecule, wherein binding of said catalytically inactive RNA molecule to said target molecule allows said catalytically inactive RNA molecule to become catalytically active towards a substrate other than the target molecule,

wherein the [observance of the presence of] action of the catalytically active RNA molecule on the substrate is indicative of the presence of said target molecule in said composition.

F1

REMARKS

Claim 23 is pending and has been amended to replace the phrase "is capable of binding" with the term "binds." Claim 23 also has been amended to recite that binding of the catalytically inactive RNA molecule to the target molecule allows the catalytically inactive RNA molecule to become catalytically active "towards a substrate other than the target molecule" and that "action of the catalytically active RNA molecule on the substrate is indicative of the presence of said target molecule in said composition." Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at, for example, page 71, lines 3-24 and in Figures 26, 31 and 32. No new matter has been added.

Amendment of the claims should in no way be considered to be an acquiescence to any of the Examiner's rejections and was done solely to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims as originally